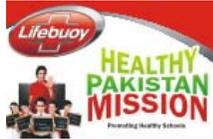


Two pieces of great news!

One for the **Lifebuoy & Surf Excel teams:**



WE WON AN AWARD~!!! *applause*

It is the Unilever Sustainability Award 2011 for Health & Hygiene. The Unilever programs competing in this category were the CSR initiatives of Lifebuoy, Surf Excel and Blue Band. Surf Excel Dirt is Good and Lifebuoy Healthy Hoga Pakistan both won the award.

The award was given yesterday (18th July 2011) at a session where Unilever shared their Sustainable Living Plan. The award was received by Ms. Baela Jamil. Durray Sadaf and I were present during the session. None of us knew we would be given an award and hence it was a very pleasant surprise.

Ms. Baela was also asked to address the audience. She acknowledged the efforts of the Lifebuoy and Surf Excel teams at Unilever and at ITA and said that this was all due to the synergies between the two organizations that so much had been accomplished. She emphasised that one must not underestimate what a child is capable of and sending home health and hygiene messages through children actually spreads the message across to the larger society. She also said that such programs promote leadership and develop responsible young citizens.

The other for the **ASER team**



In a meeting with the Senior Education Minister, Government of Sindh on 18th July 2011, Mr. Pir Mazhar ul Haq acknowledged the work done through the Annual status of Education Report by ITA. He said that the Government had studied the report and gained a lot from it. Pir Mazhar ul Haq admitted that the education situation in Sindh was devastating. He said that the Government had made many decisions based on the findings of ASER.

He shared some of the plans the Government of Sindh had made after considering the findings of ASER and PEACE. Some of these plans are:

- To hire head teachers of schools based on performance. To empower the head teacher, allow them to hire and fire teachers and give them good salary packages. The head teacher will be responsible for feeder schools too. He/she has to produce at least 45% result. If the head teacher is unable to meet this requirement he/she will face dire consequences.
- The government has also decided to outsource the examinations from grades 4 to 8 so that a fair and transparent report of the progress of schools is obtained throughout the Sindh region
- the government is also making efforts to consolidate the numerous one and two roomed schools which are present throughout the rural areas of Sindh.

Pir Mazhar ul Haq encouraged ITA to work in the rural areas of Sindh such as Kashmore to improve the quality of education in those areas. He appreciated ITA's Pakistan Educational Leadership Project and was pleased to hear that six participants from the Government of Sindh have gone to attend the PEL project in Plymouth State University, USA this year.

In the end, Mr. Pir Mazhar ul Haq appreciated ITA's efforts to conduct the ASER surveys in rural areas. He was very pleased to hear that this report will be published every year upto 2015. He said that it is a very beneficial initiative by ITA and the

government can and has utilised the findings of ASER in several ways.

The appreciation of the ASER by the Government of Sindh is not only a source of motivation for ITA teams, but it is a great pleasure to know that the report is actually being utilized effectively for policy making decisions by the Government.